

INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE & ADVOCACY



Kathey Avery, RN, BSN

Avery Health - Education and Consulting brings extensive experience and knowledge to help individuals and groups achieve positive health outcomes and implement equity.

Kathey Avery, founder and owner of Avery Health - Education and Consulting, has more than 35 years of experience in healthcare and community activism. She is dedicated to raising awareness about, and helping in the prevention of, chronic diseases and preventable cancers through patient and public education and personal accountability.

Contact Kathey Avery today at 828-768-2369 to schedule a talk or workshop. For more details, please visit www.AveryHEC.com

Women's History Month & Colorectal Awareness Month

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

March is Women's History Month, and, throughout my journey, I have been inspired by the strength and resilience of so many incredible women.



Willa Beatrice Brown (1906-1992)

At this phase of my life I have deep respect for African American women who have persevered through countless challenges to achieve greatness.

Hettie V. Williams, in her article "Black Women in Higher Education," highlights how Black women have pursued education for over two centuries despite facing systemic barriers. Historian Stephanie Y. Evans notes that Prudence Crandall's attempts to educate Black women in the 19th century were often met with violence, even in the North.

In the 1990s, I witnessed an encouraging rise in African American women enrolling in college. Many had to balance work and education, yet they persisted. Now, decades later, we see the long-term effects—more Black women earning degrees and achieving middle-class status.

As I approach my 72nd birthday in April, I reflect on the many women—historical, national, and local—who have shaped my understanding and strengthened my purpose.



Rev. Tami Forte Logan

One such woman is my dear friend Rev. Tami Forte Logan. As an ordained Womanist preacher, elder, business owner, and long-term racial equity facilitator, her work with Faith for Justice in Asheville takes immense commitment. Our time together on the Racial Justice Coalition board has been invaluable, and she continues to pursue higher education while advocating for justice.

Historically, I am in awe of Willa Beatrice Brown (1906-1992), a pioneering aviator, lobbyist, teacher, and civil rights activist. She was the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license in the US, the first Black woman to run for Congress, and the first African American officer in the Civil Air Patrol. Her training efforts helped create the Tuskegee Airmen, a significant contribution to history.

Locally, my admiration goes to Ms. Sophie Dixon, a true trailblazer. Born and raised in Stumptown, she graduated from Stephens-Lee High School and later married husband Daniel; they raised three children. She earned an associate degree while working at Taylor Instruments for more than 35 years. She and her family moved to the Shiloh community.



Ms. Sophie Dixon

I met Sophie at WRES, where she was a force at the front desk as I distributed flyers for Building Bridges sessions. She continues to serve her community, leading the Shiloh Community Association and remaining dedicated to WRES. In 2024, she received the Ella Baker Brilliance Award from Tzedek for her leadership in addressing systemic oppression.

This leads me to another historical inspiration, Ella Jo Baker (1903-1986).

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, and raised in North Carolina, Baker developed a passion for social justice, deeply influenced by her grandmother's experiences under slavery. Her grandmother's resilience in the face of racism shaped Baker's lifelong activism.



Ella Jo Baker (1903-1986)



Stephanie Hickling Beckman

I am also honored to know Stephanie Hickling Beckman, co-founder of Different Strokes! Performing Arts Collective. Through theater, she fosters cultural understanding and challenges societal norms, using her craft to inspire change.



US Rep. Jasmine Felicia Crockett



Johnnie Grant

On a national level, I am deeply inspired by Jasmine Felicia Crockett, a US Democratic Representative from Texas's 30th congressional district. Her bold, unapologetic approach, and sometimes humorous delivery of hard truths, make me rush to the TV whenever she speaks. She represents the future of African American women in leadership.

I will also give a shout out to Johnnie Grant for *The Urban News*, without which our community would not have a way to stay informed, inspired, and feel a sense of communi-

ty. I have known and admired Johnnie since our Mission Hospital days in the '70s. Johnnie has been quoted in sharing that she was inspired to begin *The Urban News* because of her childhood love of reading *Jet*, *Ebony*, and other Black-owned publications in her East End neighborhood.

Given opportunities, Black women continue to rise and excel. However, as these stories demonstrate, even without opportunities they find ways to achieve and persevere. Their resilience, determination, and brilliance are a testament to the power of Black women in shaping history and our collective future.

My personal contribution and purpose is making sure health is always at the forefront of our community. Without good wholistic health we cannot fully fulfill our purpose.

The Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy



The mission of the **Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy** is to promote optimum health for all residents of Buncombe County and surrounding areas by addressing the social determinants of health and the inequities in access to affordable and preventive healthcare.

www.ifpha.org

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Colorectal Cancer Awareness

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Please get screened!

Experts are unsure why colorectal cancer rates are rising among young adults. Researchers are exploring potential factors such as diet, obesity, lack of exercise, tobacco and alcohol use, and environmental exposure to chemicals.

In 2019, approximately 20,000 new cases were diagnosed. While colorectal cancer diagnosis and mortality rates among African Americans have declined over the past decade, they remain higher than those of other racial and ethnic groups. Early detection through screening can save lives.

Lunch & Learn



Join Kathey Avery on the third and fourth

Wednesdays of the month from 12-1 p.m. at the Linwood Crump Shiloh Community Center, 121 Shiloh Road in Asheville. The community nurse will address "Hot Topics" and provide education and knowledge to help keep you healthy. All are welcome!